



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER 2003-019

WHEREAS, portions of New Mexico have experienced mild drought conditions since 1996; and

WHEREAS, drought conditions intensified during the extremely dry winter of 2001-2002 and spring of 2003, with large portions of New Mexico experiencing severe to extreme drought conditions; and

WHEREAS, total statewide reservoir levels are at their lowest point since October 1978; and

WHEREAS, it may take several years of significantly higher than normal levels of precipitation and snow pack to allow for current reservoir storage to recover to levels that will satisfy all demands; and

WHEREAS, the National Weather Service and Natural Resource Conservation Service's coordinated May 1 snow pack runoff forecast projects below to well below normal runoff volumes at 60% of the forecast location in the state, including the Canadian, Rio Grande and San Juan river basins; and

WHEREAS, present composite snow pack levels for eight of the ten basins in the state are significantly lower than the thirty year averages for those areas; and

WHEREAS, the present combination of low reservoir levels and projected snowmelt runoff forecasts continues to match the lows for the state not seen since the drought of the mid-1970s; and

WHEREAS, runoff into some major streams is expected to be as low as 53% of normal; and

WHEREAS, stream flow during water year 2002 on the Pecos River was the lowest since 1950 and on the Rio Chama was the lowest since 1977; and

WHEREAS, five-year precipitation deficits of up to 18 inches have been recorded in two basins; and

WHEREAS, the National Weather Service believes that long-term trends indicate that the State may be entering a period of prolonged drought; and

WHEREAS, the El Nino Southern Oscillation trend forecast to bring an increased amount of winter precipitation has not fully developed this year; and

WHEREAS, there is a shortage of soil moisture in the rangelands and forests; and

WHEREAS, the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Vegetation Health Index throughout 2002 showed a high level of stress on range and farm land throughout the State; and

WHEREAS, it may take a considerable amount of precipitation and snow melt runoff to return the soil moisture conditions and vegetation health to reasonable levels; and

WHEREAS, fire conditions are expected to reach a critical stage in many areas of the state this spring and summer; and

WHEREAS, compliance with Endangered Species Act may be compromised by the drought; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico Drought Monitoring Work Group has recommended that warning or emergency conditions have been met in the majority of the state's eight climate divisions; and

WHEREAS, all indications are that drought conditions are not likely to abate in the near future and may worsen; and

WHEREAS, extraordinary measures are necessary to protect public health, ensure public safety and well being, and provide for the economic stability of the State.

NOW, THEREFORE I, Bill Richardson, Governor of the State of New Mexico, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and Laws of the State of New Mexico, do hereby declare a state of emergency due to drought conditions statewide; and

I FURTHER DIRECT the establishment of the New Mexico State Drought Task Force as follows:

1. The Task Force shall be composed of the following members:
 - a. The State Engineer, or designee, who shall serve as Chair.
 - b. The Secretary of the Environment Department, or designee, who shall serve as Vice Chair.

- c. The Executive Director of the New Mexico Finance Authority, or designee, who shall serve as Secretary and shall provide staff and administrative support to the Task Force.
 - d. The Director of the Interstate Stream Commission, or designee.
 - e. The Secretary of the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department, or designee.
 - f. The Secretary of the Department of Finance and Administration, or designee.
 - g. The Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, or designee.
 - h. The Director of the Office of Emergency Management of the Department of Public Safety, or designee.
 - i. The Secretary of the Office of Indian Affairs, or designee.
 - j. The Director of Policy and Planning in the Office of the Governor, or designee.
 - k. The Secretary of the Department of Economic Development, or designee.
 - l. The Secretary of the Tourism Department, or designee.
2. The purpose of the Task Force shall be to provide ongoing oversight and examination of statewide drought conditions.
 3. The Task Force shall make recommendations to the Governor for intermediate actions and long-term strategies to mitigate drought conditions and impacts in the State.
 4. The Task Force shall appoint such Working Groups as may be necessary and appropriate to examine and recommend solutions regarding the drought conditions to the Task Force.
 5. The Task Force shall provide guidance and information to the Governor regarding drought conditions.
 6. The Task Force shall invite local government officials, federal officials, and Indian tribes and pueblos to participate in the activities of the Task Force.
 7. The Task Force shall meet at least once each quarter of the year and shall conduct all meetings and maintain written minutes of their proceedings in conformity with the provisions of the New Mexico Open Meetings Act.
 8. The Task Force shall meet immediately upon execution of this Executive Order to establish its organizational structure and revise the New Mexico Drought Plan to conform to the provisions set forth herein. The Task Force, thereafter, shall prepare and submit, on or before November 1 of each year, an annual update of the New Mexico Drought Plan, which shall include recommendations to the Governor for drought mitigation actions.

9. For purposes of conducting business, a majority of the membership of the Task Force shall constitute a quorum.

I FURTHER ORDER the activation of the New Mexico Drought Plan upon its revision as set forth herein to assess conditions, evaluate impacts, and make recommendations as to appropriate response and mitigation actions to be taken; and

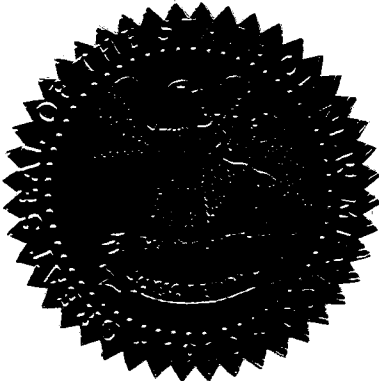
I FURTHER AUTHORIZE all executive branch agencies of state government to apply for and, if eligible and qualified, receive emergency funds as required to carry out the New Mexico Drought Plan and for such other disaster relief related to drought as set forth in this Executive Order, such funds to be released upon approval by the Office of the Governor based on the recommendation of the New Mexico State Drought Task Force, pursuant to and in accordance with Sections 6-7-1 through 6-7-3, NMSA 1978.

This Executive Order supersedes any other previous orders, proclamations or directives in conflict. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until such time as it is rescinded by the Governor.

ATTEST:



REBECCA VIGIL-GIRON
SECRETARY OF STATE



DONE AT THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE
THIS 30th DAY OF MAY, 2003.

WITNESS MY HAND AND THE GREAT
SEAL OF THE STATE OF NEW
MEXICO.



BILL RICHARDSON
GOVERNOR